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Remarks

Claims 1, 2, 5-35, 37-40, 42-46, 48 and 50-58 are pending in this Application, with claims 1, 2, 5-17, 19-21, 33-35, 37-40, 42-46, 48, 50, 51 and 53-58 being allowed and claims 23, 25-28 and 30-32 being allowable. By the above Amendments, claims 18, 22 and 40 have been amended, claims 23 and 52 have been canceled, and claim 59 has been added. As a result, claims 1, 2, 5-22, 24-35, 37-40, 42-46, 48, 50, 51, 53-59 are at issue.

Section 112 Rejection

In paragraph two of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for not distinctly claiming the subject matter of the invention. Applicants have amended claim 18 to resolve the alleged indefiniteness. Thus, Applicants request the allowance of claim 18.

Section 102 Rejection

In paragraph four of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 22, 29 and 52 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,139,291 to Schultz ("Schultz").

Applicants have amended independent claim 22 to include the subject matter of dependent claim 23, which is indicated as being allowable on page 3 of the Office Action. Claim 29 depends from amended independent claim 22 and therefore requires all elements of that claim. Consequently, Applicants request the allowance of claims 22 and 29 over the art of record, including Schultz. Applicants have canceled claim 52.

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Section 103 Rejection

In paragraph six of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being allegedly obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,139,291 to Schultz ("Schultz").

Claim 24 depends from independent claim 22, which Applicants have amended to include the allowable subject matter of claim 23. Thus, claim 24 requires all elements of presently-allowable claim 22. Accordingly, Applicants request the allowance of claim 24 over the art of record, including Schultz.

Allowable Claims

In paragraph nine of the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 23, 25-28 and 30-32 are allowable if re-written in independent form. Dependent claim 23 was canceled, however, the subject matter of the claim was added to independent claim 22, thereby making claim 22 allowable. Since claims 25-28 and 30-32 depend from amended independent claim 22, Applicants request allowance of claims 25-28 and 30-32.

In paragraph ten of the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that dependent claim 18 would be allowable if re-written to resolve the Section 112 rejection. As set forth above, Applicants have amended claim 18 to resolve the alleged indefiniteness and as a result, request allowance of the claim.

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Added Claim

Applicants have added independent claim 59, which includes the subject matter of allowable claims 22 and 25. Added claim 59 does not add new matter and is fully supported by the disclosure in the Application. Applicants request allowance of added claim 59.

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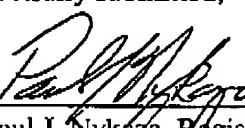
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe that claims 1, 2, 5-22, 24-35, 37-40, 42-46, 48, 50, 51, 53-59 are in a condition for allowance, and respectfully request early notice of the same. Applicants request that the Examiner call the undersigned attorney if the Examiner has any questions concerning this Reply, or if it will expedite the progress of this Application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 9, 2004

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this document is being facsimile transmitted to Examiner John B. Walsh, Art Unit No. 3676, at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on March 9, 2004 to Fax No. 1-703-872-9327.


Lynn A. Handrick/194932.1

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